

Town of Arlington Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

Tuesday, September 23, 2003 7:15 PM

Committee members present: Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Ralph Elwell, Lt. Jim McHugh, John Sanchez, Scott Smith, David Walkinshaw

Also present: Ray Bradley, Paolo Marinelli

Administration

The minutes of 8/26 were approved unanimously.

Town Day Report

Committee members judged TAC's first official Town Day offering to be a success. The booth was well stocked and staffed and was heavily visited. Suggestions for next year included having larger quantities of bus schedules and larger maps.

Pace Car Report

Ralph Elwell reported that with the publication of the Arlington Advocate article, the promotion at the Town Day booth and the forwarding of the Pace Car package to the Board of Selectmen, the next step will be to take promotional photos of public officials signing the pledge. Elisabeth Carr-Jones reported that bumper stickers would cost a dollar or less each to print. Ralph and Elisabeth expect to meet in the next month to further plan the campaign.

Crosswalk Painting and Signs

John Sanchez reported that the crosswalk painting had been completed. He also reported on a request from Heather Thomas of Safe Routes to Schools to upgrade pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of the Thompson, Dallin and Ottoson schools. It was established that Heather's issues were directly related to the work of the crosswalk working group and that she should be invited to the group's next meeting.

It was reported that a sign is missing on Lake Street at the Bikeway crossing and that the new crosswalk on Spring Street at Jason Street was partially obscured by shrubbery on the MWRA property. Paolo Marinelli noted that Belmont is in the process of implementing international crosswalks, thermoplastic pavement markings and other pedestrian infrastructure along with a four to two lane conversion on Trapelo Road.

DPW Execution vs. Requests

Scott Smith reported that there was a discrepancy between what the Committee had requested for thermoplastic crosswalks and what the contractors executed. John Sanchez explained that specific instructions, such as standardizing crosswalk widths, are not written into the contracts and need to be communicated to the contractor at the time of the work. Elisabeth Carr-Jones suggested that the crosswalk working group develop a handout for crosswalks to be given to the contractors. The Committee endorsed this suggestion.

David Walkinshaw asked if Public Works had any control over the quality of paint that is used on the Town's crosswalks, noting that many fade in a very short period of time; John Sanchez said that the Town could require the contractors to use paint that the Town provides. David also inquired about the crosswalk signs approved at the July TAC meeting; John reported that the signs were in the queue.

Paolo Marinelli asked if the new yellow/green crosswalk signs could be used for the Bikeway crossings at Lake and Mill Streets. Scott Smith expressed the importance of 12' wide crosswalks at these locations, John Sanchez reminded the Committee that thermoplastic is slippery for cyclists when wet and Lt. McHugh suggested the possibility of directed lighting at Mill Street. It was agreed that these crossings should be further investigated by the crosswalk working group.

Scott Smith suggested that the Town begin using thermoplastic more extensively next year and that the crosswalk working group provide a prioritized list of crosswalks to be upgraded to thermoplastic. John Sanchez voiced that he is in favor of upgrading to thermoplastic, but is concerned about the cost. Lt. McHugh suggested that, once approved by the Committee, the list might be brought to the Board of Selectmen for possible funding options.

Elisabeth Carr-Jones asked about the granite curbing at the Jason Street/Spring Street traffic island. John Sanchez and David Walkinshaw reported that the neighborhood residents had raised the funds to upgrade the traffic island from an asphalt berm to a granite planter.

Quincy/Gray Update

Elisabeth Carr-Jones reported that she had contacted people representing the neighbors and the school and was waiting to hear from Paul Schlichtman before finalizing the date of October 17th for the Gray/Quincy/Fountain working group meeting. Ralph Elwell suggested inviting the Ottoson Middle School Principal to the meeting.

Broadway/Rawson Update

Scott Smith reported that the crash statistics for each of the two intersections show approximately one crash per year, although the injury rate at Rawson/Warren is higher than at Broadway/Rawson. Scott presented a flyer to be distributed in the neighborhood announcing the working group's October 7th meeting.

Mass Ave CDBG Update

Scott Smith reported that the working group would be concentrating on involving the business community in visualization of the area and that he was working with Kevin O'Brien to develop the next level of detail for the process.

Mass/Pleasant CDBG Update

Scott Smith reported for Ed Starr that copies of the consultant report on the Mass Ave/ Rt. 60 intersection had been provided for working group members by the Planning Department and that Ray Bradley had been added as a member of the working group.

Allocation of Resources

The Committee reviewed the items on the list of Active/Planned TAC Projects and Working Groups. The following assessments were made:

- Pleasant Street: completed, with the exception of pending legislation
- Hutchinson Road: in progress, short-term
- Broadway/Foster/Rawson: in progress, short-term
- Gray/Quincy/Fountain: in progress, short-term
- Right Turn on Red: can wait until Committee members are free
- Mass Ave Corridor: in progress, long-term
- Pace Car: in progress
- By-Laws: nearly complete, review of latest revisions requested for next mtg.
- Crosswalk working group: nearly complete

Traffic Measurement Baseline: in progress, on-going
Crash Analysis Review/Update: in progress
Mass/Pleasant CDBG: in progress
Symmes Traffic: completed, except for review of proposals
Analysis of V2020 Traffic Survey: in queue, significant data every 5 yrs?
Downing Square: in progress
Alternative Transportation Day: in progress, ABAC in lead role

Town Transportation News

The Committee discussed an e-mail request to place an in-road pedestrian warning sign at the crosswalk on Summer Street at Washington Street. Since there are no spare signs, it was suggested that the sign moved by persons unknown from Jason Street at Menotomy to Jason at Norfolk be relocated to Summer at Washington. Committee members volunteered to investigate issues related to implementing this proposal.

John Sanchez announced that the Summer Street Reconstruction Project has been advertised, setting in motion an anticipated contractor selection in late winter and commencement of construction next summer.

Scott Smith reported on a request for consulting services support by an Arlington High School class applying for an MIT-Lemelson Grant to design and test a crosswalk that would be more visible at night. The Committee applauded and endorsed this effort.

Paolo Marinelli asked about the Committee's representation on the Disabilities Commission. It was agreed to determine if Kevin O'Brien would continue Alan McClennen's role as liaison to the Commission.

Lt. McHugh announced that a group was forming to look into parking and fire issues in East Arlington.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Handouts:

Agenda packet including Meeting Agenda of 9/23/03 & list of Active/Planned TAC Projects and Working Groups - from Ed Starr

Meeting Minutes of 8/26/03 - from Scott Smith

Announcement of Broadway/Rawson working group meeting - from Scott Smith

Revised draft TAC By-Laws - from Ralph Elwell

E-mail message from Scott Johnson regarding Park Avenue - from Ralph Elwell